

any change in policy is necessary if they're not making, in your view, sufficient progress?

The President. I think there are three factors involved in why are they going slower. First of all, I think that this is a time of considerable political tension in China, that is, tension between the center and the provinces, tension because of the inevitable transformations of leadership that the passage of time will bring about in the—not, at least, in the foreseeable future. And in times of a transition like that, it tends to be more difficult to effect change of any kind. I think that's the first thing.

The second thing, I think, is that we see in the culture of China, and in many other Asian societies, a desire to preserve order in the interest of the group, often at the expense of the individual. We saw a variant of that in the discussion that I had, you know, with the Government of Singapore over the case of the Fay caning. And many believe that in a world that is tumultuous like ours is, you have to have more order, even at the expense of individual rights. My answer to that, obviously, is that what we asked them to do was not to become like us but to honor universally recognized standards of human rights. But you asked me the question.

The third thing, I think, is that a country with 1.2 billion people and the third largest economy in the world, conscious of all the cross currents of change in the difficulties it is facing, is going to have, inevitably, an reluctance to take steps which are right if it looks like every step that is taken, is taken under the pressure of the United States, some outside power making them do it.

And the fourth thing I would say is that this was something, a step we took not in cooperation with the international community. No other nation agreed with us. So it wasn't like there was a big multinational coalition; it's not like sanctions on Iraq, for example.

Now, I think one of the most important things is the third point I made. Every one of you should put yourselves in that position. Would you move forward if you thought no matter what you did and how good it was, every time you did it, it would be interpreted that you were doing it because someone from outside your country were pressuring you to do it?

But I don't want to minimize the fact that there are still serious human rights problems there. We are going to continue to work on them, but I believe doing this in the context of our national security interests, our economic interests, and the opening of China, both economically and in many other ways, and being able to have an explicit and open human rights agenda not hobbled by timetables which may be artificial, is the right way to go. I predict that it will be successful, more successful on human rights than the alternative would have been, and it is my judgment—I am absolutely convinced that's the right thing, that it's in the interest of the United States, and I have done it for that reason.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 58th news conference began at 5:10 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Fay, U.S. citizen convicted of vandalism in Singapore and sentenced to caning.

Statement on the Death of Timothy West *May 26, 1994*

Hillary and I were heartbroken when we learned that Timothy West, the 4-year-old boy with leukemia who hugged me so close when I visited him, died this morning in Houston. This precious boy carried the burdens of his illness with courage and a sense of warmth that touched me deeply. Our prayers are with Timothy's parents, Chris and Lisa West, and we especially want to thank the doctors, nurses, and

staff of the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center for pouring so much of themselves into Timothy's treatment and care. On such a sorrowful day, I hope they will feel healed by Timothy's strength and the knowledge that he is now with God.